



Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Stephen M. Haase
Albert Balagso
Jay Marcus

**SUBJECT: FIVE WOUNDS/
BROOKWOOD TERRACE
STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

DATE: July 15, 2002

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

SNI AREA: Five Wounds / Brookwood Terrace

RECOMMENDATION

Staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend that the City Council: (1) approve the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan* as the City/community vision for the future of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area, (2) authorize the Administration to direct the City Departments and Agencies with implementation responsibilities to begin their respective activities, including the general oversight of the implementation of the *Plan* by the Redevelopment Agency, and (3) encourage the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area property owners, residents and community members to dedicate their time, energy and resources to implement the recommendations of the *Plan* and continue with their community building activities.

BACKGROUND

Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Planning Area. The Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace (FWBT) Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) area is located roughly one mile east of downtown San Jose. The planning area is bounded by Coyote Creek to the west and Lower Silver Creek to the north. Except for the “Little Portugal North” and “Anne Darling” neighborhoods, U.S. Highway 101 forms the eastern boundary and Interstate 280 forms the planning area’s boundary to the south. The “Little Portugal North” and “Anne Darling” neighborhoods are located east of Highway 101, and are bounded by Lower Silver Creek to the north, King Road to the east and Alum Rock Avenue to the south. The FWBT area has several significant community assets including: Five Wounds Church, East Santa Clara (Carnegie) Library, Roosevelt Park and several social clubs and other institutions that serve the area’s diverse ethnic communities.

As a whole, the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace planning area is predominantly residential. In the neighborhoods west of Highway 101, a diverse range of housing types are present, including single-family homes, townhouses, duplex units, apartment buildings and several mobile home parks. East of Highway 101, single-family detached homes and duplexes predominate. Neighborhoods throughout the SNI area contain both pre-World War II homes with front porches and rear yard garages, as well as Post-War homes typically designed with more garages along the street frontages.

Three commercial districts are located within FWBT planning or redevelopment areas. The most substantial is the East Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Avenue commercial corridor, which has been a Redevelopment Project Area since April, 1988 and is a designated Neighborhood Business District on the City's General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram. This corridor extends through the area's geographic center and is an important point of entry to Downtown San Jose. Existing development within the East Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor is typified by a relatively continuous row of street-facing small shops often having offices or residential uses above. Several auto repair, sales and service establishments are scattered along the East Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue Corridor. These uses are generally low intensity uses that tend to have parking in front, in contrast to other more pedestrian friendly uses along the corridor. There are active Business Associations for both East Santa Clara and Alum Rock.

Commercial uses also line the Julian Street/McKee Avenue corridor to the north. The largest of these is the McKee Shopping Center, located between North 33rd Street and King Road. To the south, is the McLaughlin Avenue-24th Street corridor where retail uses are concentrated near the intersection of McLaughlin Avenue-24th Street and William Street.

A Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way (UPROW) extends north and south through the center of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace planning area. Industrial uses are clustered along the UPROW and near Highway 101. The largest of these industrial uses is a 20-acre site, whose primary tenant used to be San Jose Steel. This site is located north of Five Wounds Church on the west side of U.S. 101 between the church and Julian Street. Within the next decade, an underground Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line is planned to be constructed through this area as part of the Milpitas-San Jose-Santa Clara BART extension. The most likely route is primarily along a portion of the UPROW alignment. As a result of this project, it is anticipated that the existing railroad line will be abandoned. In addition, a BART station is planned in or near the "San Jose Steel" area described above and the Downtown/East Valley Light Rail project is planned to extend along the East Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor. Together, these three elements present a powerful opportunity for redevelopment of older and underutilized industrial and commercial sites, as well as redevelopment of the length of the UPROW through this area. Future development in this area will require continued active NAC involvement.

Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Planning Process and Participation. The *Neighborhood Improvement Plan* was prepared with the assistance of a consultant team, initially led by Calthorpe and Associates and later Catalyst, when the lead consultant left Calthorpe to form a new firm. Staff and consultants worked with community members and a 22-member Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) made up of residents, property owners, business

owners and other stakeholders. Due to the complexity and breadth of potential land use changes, as well as the need to capture nearer term priorities and turn them into action items, the NAC met 18 times plus it held four Community Workshops between November 2000 and July 2002. This effort was a bit longer than most other SNI planning processes. Despite the length of the process, all meetings were well attended by a dedicated group of active residents, merchants, and property owners. In addition, there was typically a sizable audience of both English and Spanish-speaking residents attending the meetings.

Because of the complicated nature of this *Plan*, in addition to extensive community input, a special emphasis was placed on coordination with the Valley Transportation Authority due to the Downtown/East Valley Light Rail Project and the BART extension. Additionally, many staff members from various City Departments dedicated their time and energy providing information for community members and input to and review of this Plan.

At its June 25th meeting, the NAC received final comments from members of the public, “fine tuned” the document and voted unanimously to approve the *Neighborhood Improvement Plan*. At the final workshop held on July 9th, the NAC presented the final version of the *Plan* to the public and began the work of establishing committees to work on each “Top Ten” item during the Implementation Phase.

ANALYSIS

Purposes of the Plan. The purposes of the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan* are to document the community’s vision for its neighborhood, identify the community’s specific goals and objectives for improving the area, and provide the City, Redevelopment Agency and various community stakeholders with a clear guide for neighborhood improvements.

Vision. Community members in the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area crafted a vision for the future of their area where the individual neighborhoods are part of a “small town” next to the bustling metropolitan core of San Jose. This small town is envisioned to be a place where:

- People are able to walk easily, safely and comfortably throughout the neighborhood to local shopping, schools, recreation facilities and other destinations;
- The area’s distinctive cultural and natural assets are preserved and enhanced;
- Residents in the community, especially youth, are well-served by parks;
- A network of trails provides enjoyment for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Neighborhood-serving businesses are supported while residents have easy access to the region’s employment opportunities via convenient public transit; and
- A network of neighborhood and local transportation facilities provide for convenient pedestrian and bicycle-travel that is efficiently integrated with regional transit.

Draft Plan. Over the course of the planning process, community members discussed many actions that could bring positive changes to the area. The Strategic Action Plan is comprised of

those Action Items selected by community members as the best means for achieving the community's shared vision for the future.

A. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions represent the short list of priority actions that the community selected as having the greatest potential for positive impact. Priority actions are ranked in order of importance for immediate funding:

1. Develop an economic strategy for improving the William and 24th-McLaughlin commercial node.
2. Improve the McLaughlin streetscape and install pedestrian enhancements.
3. Improve traffic and pedestrian flow and control in the vicinity of 33rd Street and McKee Avenue.
4. Improve and/or redevelop existing retail sites at McKee and 33rd.
5. Complete Selma Olinder Park.
6. Improve William Street pedestrian environment and streetscape.
7. Complete the Coyote Creek Trail between Kelley Park and Highway 101.
8. Expand Housing Rehabilitation programs and outreach.
9. Create an East Santa Clara-Alum Rock parking strategy.
10. Increase opportunities for youth and teen activities.

Four other items of special importance to the NAC, though not part of the final top ten list because they are very long-term projects, are:

11. Develop a program and a pilot project for undergrounding utilities in the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area.
12. Create a town square near Five Wounds Church.
13. Redevelop the "San Jose Steel" area as a new transit-oriented, mixed-use urban center.
14. Protect and continue the existing small town character of the East Santa Clara – Alum Rock Corridor.

B. Other Improvement Goals and Projects Underway. The entire Action Plan is presented as a matrix, which includes the above "Top Ten" Priority Actions, plus many additional items, totaling 65 Action Items. Following are some highlights of actions begun through community and staff efforts.

1. Youth Assets Inventory. There was a sentiment among community members that more activities are needed for area youth and teens. In response to this priority, PRNS staff worked together with a NAC sub-committee, representatives from the six area schools, and representatives of community-based organizations to create a comprehensive youth assets inventory. Their findings are the basis for recommendations in Top Ten Priority Item #10. A full report related to their findings is attached as an appendix to the *Plan*.
2. Response to Traffic and Pedestrian Concerns in the Vicinity of McKee and 33rd and the Highway 101 Overcrossing. Community members expressed a very strong concern that

pedestrian and vehicular circulation should be improved in the vicinity of Anne Darling Elementary School. As a first step, Department of Transportation staff and the District 3 Council Office have been working vigilantly to gain permission from CalTrans to install pedestrian barriers along sidewalks on the Julian Street/McKee Road over-crossing at Highway 101. These improvements are expected to be in place before school opens this fall.

Additionally, Anne Darling School was selected to be in the first phase of the City's School Access Enhancement Study. In coordination with this and in response to concerns about traffic on 33rd Street south of McKee, DOT staff have been working hard to create solutions for the short-term (many have been implemented or are being worked on) as well as to develop strategies for the long-term (which are reflected in Top Ten Priority Item #3).

3. Limit alcohol sales in the area. Community members in this, as well as other SNI areas have expressed a concern about the proliferation of liquor licenses in their areas. In response, City staff is in the process of working with area residents and the Alcohol Beverage Control Board (ABC) to improve noticing requirements, create public education materials, and create a more efficient system for public input on all new and expanded ABC Liquor License applications in the area.
4. Increased Code Enforcement. As with many SNI areas, residents of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area have expressed concern regarding nuisance activities. The Division of Code Enforcement has increased its efforts in this area, including a proactive, concentrated Code Enforcement effort known as the "Driveway Team. Other efforts include vehicle abatement sweeps in the vicinity of San Jose High Academy, 33rd and McKee, East and West Courts, and Jeanne Avenue. In addition, staff has been very proactive in attempts to address both illegal dumping along the railroad tracks and community concerns about certain retail operations in the vicinity of 33rd and McKee.
5. Grant for Tree Planting and Noise Study Related to Bonita Park. The NAC was recently awarded funds to plant 200 new street trees in the area and to conduct a noise study related to the potential Bonita Park. The Bonita neighborhood is this SNI area's most underserved in terms of park access. It is also relatively high-density with many children living in this area. Available land for park development, however, is scarce. In an effort to think creatively, staff identified vacant land under the 101/280 Freeway Interchange ramps as a potential park site. The noise study is an important first step in determining the feasibility of constructing a park in this location.

Issues of particular note. The following items should be particularly noted by the Planning Commission and City Council and are intended to provide background on some issues of concern to the greater Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace community.

East Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Avenue Redevelopment. Community members and business owners very carefully constructed their vision for the future of this commercial corridor in the center of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace planning area. They understood and endorsed the concept of intensifying development along this corridor to support future transit investments, and to increase the likelihood of attracting the types of businesses they would prefer to have in this area. They also stressed that interfaces with existing residential uses behind the corridor need to be respected. Given this input, the proposed corridor land uses reflected in the *Plan* are for mixed-use, three to five story construction with active storefronts. It was recognized that given current parking requirements, some lot sizes pose a constraint to even this moderate intensification of uses. Therefore, a comprehensive parking strategy for East Santa Clara-Alum Rock is Top Priority Item #9. In addition, the community's desire is to promote walking along this major east-west corridor which extends through the heart of the Five Wounds/ Brookwood SNI area. Therefore, sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, and pedestrian amenities should be given priority when new development applications and transit improvements such as potential Light Rail along the Downtown/East Valley corridor are being designed and reviewed.

Future uses of the "San Jose Steel" site, including the "Alum Rock" BART Station. Community members and some property owners of the affected lands, spent a good deal of time considering the future of this area during the SNI planning process. The vision reflected in the *Plan* is the result of thought, input, and review by a wide variety of stakeholders, including VTA. The community envisions the transformation of lands now used for industrial purposes into uses that complement the site's proximity to future light rail and BART facilities. The vision is for mixed-use, transit-oriented development creating both ridership "generators" (primarily housing) and "destinations" such as office buildings along Highway 101, a hotel, and small retail uses lining pedestrian oriented streets. One of the key elements envisioned as part of this new development is a town square connected to East Santa Clara Street by a linear park with travel lanes on both sides. The town square grew out of the desire to have a small town focal point modeled on Old World traditions. The town square would contain inviting places to meet and greet neighbors and associates. NAC members understand that this vision is bold and long-term, but it is a goal for which they seek support from City and VTA staff and policy-makers to achieve. The City Council recently approved a General Plan amendment which redesignated the San Jose Steel site to the mix of uses envisioned by the NAC. Strong Neighborhoods, as an Asset Building based program, looked carefully at how best to build on the Five Wounds Church as a substantial social, visual, and activity center for the community.

BART Parking Garage. The initial response of the surrounding community to the discussion of a BART station at the San Jose Steel site was concern about parking and its attraction of vehicular traffic through the area by outside residents. Large scale parking facilities associated with a BART station are of particular concern because the Highway 101 interchanges at both East Santa Clara and Julian already tend to be congested at peak travel times. Given a choice, the community would prefer that any BART-related parking garage be located closer to Julian Street in order to reduce impacts to the Five Wounds Church and Elementary School. Julian Street is a route to school for many children who walk across 101 on their way to Anne Darling Elementary School each morning. Given these various transportation constraints and concerns, special consideration and actions were identified by the community.

Specifically, the community has requested several measures be taken as part of the BART project with respect to parking and circulation.

1. Limit the size/capacity of the parking garage at the Alum Rock ("San Jose Steel") station.
2. Create direct freeway access from Highway 101 into and out of the proposed parking garage at the San Jose Steel (Alum Rock) Station.
3. Construct an interchange at 101/Mabury to facilitate access to the Berryessa Station.
4. Increase parking capacity at the Berryessa Station to draw riders to that location.
5. Design "on-site" circulation along 28th Street so that it heavily favors pedestrian circulation and use of amenities such as the town square and linear park.
6. Install traffic calming devices on local streets, especially 27th and St. James Streets in order to mitigate traffic impacts directly related to the Station.
7. Work with surrounding communities to determine if permit parking is needed and desired.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan* was developed in close coordination with residents, property and business owners, and church and school representatives of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area through more than one year of monthly Neighborhood Advisory Committee meetings and four community workshops. All property owners, residents, business owners, and others within the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace SNI area were invited to the community workshops through postcard mailers, flyers, and PRNS outreach, PBCE and neighborhood association contacts. Community members actively participated in each phase of the planning process. Outreach was assisted by the two Council Offices, Neighborhood Services staff, the local neighborhood and business associations, and Planning staff.

COORDINATION

The preparation of the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan* was coordinated with the District 3 Council Office, the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, and various Departments and Agencies, including the Departments of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Transportation; Public Works; Housing; and Police as well as the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, and the Valley Transportation Authority (both Light Rail and BART project staff).

PLANNING COMMISSION

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CEQA

An addendum was prepared to the San Jose 2020 General Plan Environmental Impact Report which was previously certified on August 16, 1994 by the City Council (Resolution Number 65459).

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